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| 09/840,239      | 04/24/2001  | Hiroki Motosuna      | 123285.100          | 3497             |

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EXAMINER

ZICHT, PATRICIA C

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2164

DATE MAILED: 05/02/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

**Office Action Summary**

Application No.

09/840,239

Applicant(s)

MOTOSUNA ET AL.

Examiner

Patricia C. Zicht

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**Period for Reply**  
-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on \_\_\_\_.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-43 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-43 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 24 April 2001 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

  
**SAM RIMELL**  
**PRIMA**

**Attachment(s)**

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_.

**DETAILED ACTION**

***Claim Objections***

1. Claim 34 is objected to because of the following informalities: "unitfor" should be replaced with --unit for--. Appropriate correction is required.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112***

2. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:  
  
The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.
3. Claims 7-9 and 41 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.
4. Claim 7 recites the limitation "said business records" in line 1 of page 3. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.
5. Claims 8 and 9 are rejected because they are dependent claims of the independent rejected claim 7.
6. Claim 41 recites the limitation "said business function" in line 6. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

7. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

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A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in

(1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or

(2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

8. Claims 1-43 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Ruffin (U.S. Patent No. 6,219,654 B1).

As to claim 1, Ruffin teaches a business-supporting system for supporting activities of a client (see figure 2), comprising:

a plurality of business functions (see figure 2, references 204 and 205, where “plurality of business functions” is read on “projects” ; and see column 3, lines 8-35, where “plurality of business functions” is read on “any type of business solution”);

a request-obtaining unit for obtaining key request information that represents a request of the client who is to be provided with a service from the system (see figure 4, references 401 and 402);

a business contents database having business contents information for each of the plurality of business functions (see figure 4, reference 404); and

an adaptive function-selecting unit for selecting a business function, which is adapted to the request, from the plurality of business functions, by evaluating adaptability of the business contents information to the key request information based on the key request information and the business contents database (see figure 4, reference 403; and see column 8, line 61 through column 9, line 20).

As to claim 2, Ruffin teaches wherein the adaptive function-selecting unit evaluates the adaptability based on each of a plurality of elements of the key request information, which corresponds to the request of the client (see column 4, lines 2-5; and see figure 8, reference 805).

As to claim 3, Ruffin teaches wherein:

the key request information includes a question for eliciting the client's request, a keyword associated with the question, and character or text information input by the client (see column 4, lines 49 - 61); and

the adaptive function-selecting unit evaluates the adaptability based on at least two of: the business function previously corresponding to the question for eliciting the client's request respectively (see table 2; and see column 13, line 19 through column 14, line 43);

the business function previously corresponding to the keyword associated with the question (see table 2; and see column 13, line 19 through column 14, line 43); and

the business function retrieved based on the character or text information input by the client (see table 2; and see column 13, line 19 through column 14, line 43).

As to claim 4, Ruffin teaches wherein the adaptive function-selecting unit evaluates the adaptability by referring to each of:

the business function corresponding to the question (see column 15, lines 1-16);

the keyword corresponding to the question (see column 15, lines 1-16); and  
the business function retrieved based on the character information, with a  
predetermined degree (see column 15, lines 1-16).

As to claim 5, Ruffin teaches wherein:

the business contents information in the business contents database includes an  
aggregation of a plurality of business content elements (see figure 4, reference 404);  
and

the adaptive function-selecting unit calculates the adaptability of the key request  
information to the business contents information based on the degree of the relevance  
of the key request information and the business content elements (see column 4, lines  
17-26).

As to claim 6, Ruffin teaches wherein:

the business contents information includes a business contents sentence, in  
which business contents are described, and the business content elements are  
sentence elements of the business content sentence (see figure 4, reference 404); and

the adaptive function-selecting unit searches a sentence element related to the  
key request information (see figure 4, reference 403), from a group of the sentence  
elements that composes the business contents sentences for each of a plurality of the  
key request information (see figure 4, references 404a-404d), and calculates the

adaptability of the key request information to the business contents information based on a result of the searching (see column 4, lines 17-26).

As to claim 7, Ruffin teaches wherein:

the business contents information includes a business record that corresponds to the business function (see figure 4, reference 404); and

the adaptive function-selecting unit evaluates the adaptability of the key request information to the business contents information based on the business records (see figure 4, reference 403).

As to claim 8, Ruffin teaches wherein:

the business contents information includes evaluation information, which indicates a magnitude of evaluation of the business records, together with the business records (see figure 8, reference 804a, where "magnitude of evaluation" is read on "island-specific scores"); and

the adaptive function-selecting unit evaluates the adaptability of the key request information to the business contents information according to the evaluation information of a related business record which is related to the key request information, when the related business record is included in the business contents information (see figure 8, reference 805).

As to claim 9, Ruffin teaches the business-supporting system, further comprising a database-updating-processing unit for updating the business contents information of the business contents database according to a new business record, when the new business record is made (see figure 2, reference 206).

As to claim 10, Ruffin teaches wherein:  
an adjustment-focused section based on a condition of the corresponding business function, is set in the business contents information (see figure 12, reference 1207); and

the adaptive function-selecting unit includes a conditional correspondence-adjusting unit for adjusting the adaptability based on the relevance between the key request information and the adjustment-focused section (see figure 9).

As to claim 11, Ruffin teaches wherein the adjustment-focused section is an intensification focus section of the business function (see column 4, lines 12-16; and see figure 9).

As to claim 12, wherein the system limits the number of the business function that may be designated as the intensification focus section within a predetermined range (see figure 9, reference 904).

As to claim 13, wherein the adjustment-focused section is an amelioration focus section of the business function (see figure 4, figure 403).

As to claim 14, the business-supporting system, further comprising a database-updating-processing unit for updating the business contents database by setting the adjustment-focused section in the business contents information according to a request for setting the adjustment-focused section (see figure 2, figure 206; and see figure 4, reference 404).

As to claim 15, Ruffin teaches, wherein the adaptive function-selecting unit adjusts the adaptability by using a predetermined weighted index value for adjusting the adaptability (see figure 9, reference 903).

As to claim 16, Ruffin teaches wherein the adaptive function-selecting unit adjusts the adaptability by using a different weighted index value according to the time when the business function is designated as an intensification focus section (see figure 7).

As to claim 17, Ruffin teaches wherein the adaptive function-selecting unit adjusts the adaptability by using a different weighted index value according to the time when the business contents information of the business function is ameliorated (see figure 7).

As to claim 18, Ruffin teaches wherein the adaptive function-selecting unit adjusts the adaptability by using a different weighted index value according to the time when the business contents information is registered to the business contents database (see figure 9, references 903 and 904).

As to claim 19, wherein the adaptive function-selecting unit sets the weighted index value higher when the time is newer (see figures 7 and 9; and see column 15, line 58 through column 16, line 64).

As to claim 20, Ruffin teaches wherein the adaptive function-selecting unit adjusts the adaptability by using a different weighted index value according to the number of the past offer records of the business function (see figure 9; and see column 15, line 58 through column 16, line 64).

As to claim 21, Ruffin teaches wherein the adaptive function-selecting unit sets the weighted index value higher when the number of the past offer records is larger (see figure 9; and see column 15, line 58 through column 16, line 64).

As to claim 22, Ruffin teaches wherein the adaptive function-selecting unit adjusts the adaptability by using a different weighted index value according to the

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degree of recency of the past offer records of the business function (see figure 9; and see column 15, line 58 through column 16, line 64).

As to claim 23, Ruffin teaches wherein the adaptive function-selecting unit sets the weighted index value higher when the past offer records is newer (see figure 9; and see column 15, line 58 through column 16, line 64).

As to claim 24, Ruffin teaches wherein the adaptive function-selecting unit adjusts the adaptability by using a different weighted index value according to the degree of an evaluation on the business function adapted to the selected client's request (see figure 9; and see column 15, line 58 through column 16, line 64).

As to claim 25, Ruffin teaches wherein the adaptive function-selecting unit sets the weighted index value higher when the evaluation is higher (see figure 9; and see column 15, line 58 through column 16, line 64).

As to claim 26, Ruffin teaches wherein the adaptive function-selecting unit adjusts the adaptability by using a different weighted index value according to the degree of recency of an evaluation on the business function adapted to the selected client's request (see figure 9; and see column 15, line 58 through column 16, line 64).

As to claim 27, Ruffin teaches wherein the adaptive function-selecting unit sets the weighted index value higher when the evaluation is newer (see figure 9; and see column 15, line 58 through column 16, line 64).

As to claim 28, Ruffin teaches wherein the adaptive function-selecting unit adjusts the adaptability by limiting the number of combining objects (see figure 9) among:

- a different weighted index value according to the time when the business function is designated as an intensification focus section (see figure 7; and see (see column 15, line 58 through column 16, line 64));

- a different weighted index value according to the time when the business contents information of the business function is ameliorated (see figure 7; and see (see column 15, line 58 through column 16, line 64));

- a different weighted index value according to the number of the past offer records of the business function (see column 15, line 58 through column 16, line 64);

- a different weighted index value according to the time when the business contents information is registered to the business contents database (see column 15, line 58 through column 16, line 64); and

- a different weighted index value according to the degree of an evaluation on the business function adapted to the selected client's request (see column 15, line 58 through column 16, line 64).

As to claim 29, Ruffin teaches wherein the adaptive function-selecting unit alters at a predetermined degree (see figure 9) at least one of the weighted index values among:

For the remaining steps of this claim, the applicant is directed to remarks and discussions made in claim 28 above.

As to claim 30, Ruffin teaches, wherein:

the business contents information includes a new business contents section, which is intended to be newly prepared, in addition to an existing business contents section, which is already comprised in a corresponding business function (see figure 2, reference 206); and

the adaptive function-selecting unit adjusts adaptability of the key request information to the business contents information depending on whether the key request information relates to the existing business contents section or to the new business contents section (see column 8, lines 48-60).

As to claim 31, Ruffin teaches the business-supporting system, further comprising a database-updating unit for updating the business contents database by setting the new business contents section in the business contents information by responding to a request for setting the new business contents section (see figure 2, reference 206).

As to claim 32, Ruffin teaches the business-supporting system, further comprising an adaptive function candidate-selecting unit for finding an adaptive function candidate that is a candidate of the business function adapted to the key request information from among the plurality of business functions, before evaluating adaptability of the key request information to the business contents information, wherein the adaptive function-selecting unit evaluates the adaptability of the adaptive function candidate to the key request information (see figure 9, references 901-903).

As to claim 33, Ruffin teaches, wherein the adaptive function candidate-selecting unit finds the adaptive function candidate from answers to a plurality of questions for retrieving a request of the client (see figure 4, reference 401; and see column 4, lines 49-61).

As to claim 34, Ruffin teaches the business-supporting system, further comprising a presentation-processing unit for presenting to the client the business function, which is to be provided to the client by the business function selected by the adaptive function-selecting unit (see figure 4, reference 406).

As to claim 35, Ruffin teaches, wherein the presentation-processing unit presents the plurality of business functions in a priority order, which is obtained from a degree of adaptability calculated by the adaptive function-selecting unit (see figure 9, reference 904).

As to claim 36, Ruffin teaches the business-supporting system, further comprising a client perspective-obtaining unit for receiving information that indicates a point of interest of each of the client, wherein the presentation-processing unit changes presentation contents according to the client perspective information (see figure 9, reference 906).

As to claim 37, Ruffin teaches, wherein the client perspective-obtaining unit seeks the client perspective information on perspectives of the client, from answers for a plurality of questions for retrieving a request of the client (see figure 9).

As to claim 38, Ruffin teaches the business-supporting system, further comprising a perspective judgment criterion-storing unit for storing perspective judgment criterion information, which indicates the plurality of questions, a perspective of the client, and strength of interests towards the perspective, wherein the perspective-obtaining unit seeks the client perspective information according to the perspective judging criterion information (see figure 9).

As to claim 39, Ruffin teaches, wherein the presentation-processing unit selects the presentation contents, which are to be presented to the client, from a plurality of the presentation content candidates that are prepared for an adaptive business function

selected by the adaptive function-selecting unit based on the client perspective information (see figure 4, reference 406).

As to claim 40, Ruffin teaches a business-supporting method for supporting activities of a client (see figure 2), comprising:

obtaining key request information, which represents a request of a client (see figure 4, reference 401); and selecting a business function, which is adapted to a request of the client, by evaluating adaptability of business contents information to the key request information, based on the key request information and a business contents database, using the business contents database that has the business contents information for each of the plurality of business functions (see figure 4, reference 403; and see column 8, line 61 through column 9, line 20).

As to claim 41, Ruffin teaches a program of a processing to support activities of a client (see figure 2), which is executed by a computer (see figure 3), the program comprising:

an obtaining module for obtaining key request information that represents a request of a client who gets a business offer from a business-supporting server of a business supporter (see figure 2, reference 202, where "obtaining module" is read on "qualify a potential customer"); and

a selecting module for selecting the business function adapted to the client's request using a business contents database having respective business contents

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information of the plurality of business functions, by evaluating adaptability of business contents information to the key request information based on the key request information and the business contents database (see figure 2, references 205 and 206, where "selecting module" is read on "detailed examination and selection of projects from ordered list").

As to claim 42, Ruffin teaches a recording medium that stores a program, which can be read out and executed by a computer (see figure 3), and the program supporting activities of a client (see figure 2), comprising:

a key request information executing module for executing key request information which represents a request of a client who is provided with a service of a business-supporting system (see figures 2 and 4; and see column 8, line 61 through column 9, line 20); and

a selecting module for selecting a business function, which is adapted to a request of the client, by evaluating adaptability of business contents information to the key request information, based on the key request information and a business contents database, using the business contents database that has the business contents information for each of the plurality of business functions (see figures 2 and 4; and see column 8, line 61 through column 9, line 20).

As to claim 43, Ruffin teaches a business-supporting system connecting to a client terminal for providing a client at the client terminal with a business support in

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association with at least one of a plurality of different business functions, the system comprising (see figures 2 and 4):

a client's request obtaining section connecting to the client terminal and receiving a request from the client terminal (see figure 4, reference 401);

a business contents database storing business contents information for each of the plurality of business functions (see figure 4, reference 404); and

an adaptive function-selecting section connecting both to the client's request obtaining section and to the business contents database, the selecting section receiving the business contents information from the business contents database and acquiring a key request information representing the request received from the client terminal for an evaluation of adaptability of the business contents information to the key request information (see figure 4, reference 403; and see column 8, line 61 through column 9, line 20).

### ***Conclusion***

9. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

The following patents are cited to further show the state of art with respect to: computer assisted decision management system, computer-implemented decision management system with dynamically generated questions and answer choices, and method, system and program product for evaluating business requirements of an enterprise for generating business solution deliverables.

| Patent/Pub. No. | Issued to          | Cited for teaching                            |
|-----------------|--------------------|---|
| 5963931         | Fagg, III et. al.  | Computer assisted decision management system. |
| 5978784         | Fagg, III et. al . | System w/dynamic generated questions/answers. |
| 6249769         | Ruff et. al.       | Enterprise for generating business solutions. |

10. Any inquiries concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Patricia C. Zicht, whose telephone number is (571) 272-5866. The examiner can normally be reached on Mondays-Fridays from 08:00 am to 04:30 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Dov Popovici, can be reached at (571) 272-4083.

pcz

April 18, 2005

  
**SAM RIMELL**  
PRIMARY EXAMINER